

Dear Colleagues,

“[Juneteenth](#)” is the celebration of ending slavery, on June 19th, 1865 when Union General Gordon Granger read the “General order No.3” in Galveston, Texas to announce “...all slaves are free”. This was necessary because in the two years that had followed President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, many slave owners moved to areas outside of the influence of Union troops. Juneteenth marked the day many slaves *learned of* their freedom, but oppression persisted for the newly freed slaves, who were told to, “...remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages.” The historic acknowledgement this week of Juneteenth as a national holiday is one step towards our nation’s reckoning with persistent racial inequity, but we know structural racism must be addressed for everyone to enjoy equal benefits of freedom.

Last year the entire Department of Pediatrics committed to becoming an anti-racist, inclusive community. Since that time, the Department of Pediatrics launched [SPAARC](#), engaging 443 members of the DoP, including staff, trainees, and faculty, to begin this journey with exciting work in the domains of communication, community engagement, research, mentoring, training, leadership representation, recruitment and advancement, staff engagement, and racism and HR measurement. On the heels of the findings from the [Commission on justice and equity](#), we know much work remains to be done inside and outside of Stanford’s walls, but we remain hopeful that, together, we can continue the work of dismantling racism through systems change.

We pause today to celebrate this first Federal Juneteenth holiday while we acknowledge the atrocities of the past, celebrate the heroes who have led us forward, remain mindful of persisting systemic racism, and use this symbolic moment to commit to staying off the sidelines in the fight towards true racial equity. We hope that you will [click here](#) to join us in SPAARC 2.0 to move this critical work forward.

Here are some learning resources:

- [Resources on Juneteenth at Stanford Libraries](#)
- [Stanford Medicine Magazine: Closing the Gap: Addressing Racial Inequity in Medicine, featuring Dr. Eric Sibley from Pediatric GI](#)
- [History and Impact of Juneteenth](#) from Stanford Professor Dr. Kimberly Thomas McNair
- [Stanford Medicine Black Lives Matter Resources](#)
- [Juneteenth.com](#)
- [Juneteenth Resources from the National Museum of African American History and Culture](#)
- [YouTube: What is Juneteenth?](#)
- [YouTube: Why Juneteenth is Important](#)

Sincerely,

Mary Leonard and Baraka Floyd